DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 024 640 SP 001 904

By- Redd, George N.

Preparation of Teachers For Schools of the Inner City.

Pub Date Nov 68

Note- 5p.; Prepared for Cent. State Coll. and Univ. Professional Educ. Seminar, Nov. 7-8, 1968, Dep. of Educ., Univ. of Northern Ia., Cedar Falls.

EDRS Price MF- $0.25 HC- $0.35

Descriptors- Inner City, Negro Colleges, *Negro Teachers, *Program Descriptions, *Social Change, Social Structure, Teacher Education, *Teacher Education Curriculum, *Urban Education

Identifiers- Fisk University, South, Tennessee

About one-fourth of the undergraduate student body of 1,200 at Fisk University expect to teach; most of them will teach in inner city schools. Therefore, teacher education at Fisk University has been conditioned mainly by the trend of urbanization in American life. Every prospective teacher is required to gain a solid foundation in the liberal arts for the first two years in college; major study begins in the junior year. All professional education courses relate to a common objective--"the development of competence to cope with the human and educational problems of the inner city, created by recent changes in the social structure of the urban community." In addition to courses in curriculum and teaching, general psychology, educational psychology, and educational tests and measurements, three key courses are required: "American Education: Principles and Practices," which emphasizes the social structure of the city; "Growing up in the Inner City"; and "Student Teaching," which usually takes place in the inner city schools of Nashville. Two additional courses are available as electives: "Education in the South" and "Education of the Negro." At the graduate level, a program to prepare experienced elementary school teachers to understand and cope with educational and social problems of the South has been instituted under the Higher Education Act of 1965. (SG)

ED0 24640

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

PREPARATION OF TEACHERS FOR SCHOOLS OF THE INNER CITY

A Field Report prepared for the Central State
Colleges and Universities
Professional Education Seminar

November 7 and 8, 1968

Department of Education
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa

by

George N. Redd
Dean of the College and Professor of Education

Fisk University
Nashville, Tennessee

SP001904

PREPARATION OF TEACHERS FOR

SCHOOLS OF THE INNER CITY

George N. Redd
Dean of the College and Professor of Education

Teacher education at Fisk University in recent years has been conditioned mainly by a very significant trend in American life - the rapid urbanization of the nation's population and the increasing complexity of the social and educational problems resulting therefrom. This trend started on a large scale during World War I, with the great population shifts from the country to the city and from the South to the Northeast and the West. These shifts were accelerated rapidly during, and immediately following World War II.

During that period, there was a steady flow of the Negro population from the rural South to the large urban centers of the Region and the Nation. A significant number of these persons, largely uneducated and unskilled settled in the inner city, creating, because of circumstances mainly beyond their control, what are commonly referred to now as the slums and ghettos. As a result, serious social and educational problems have emerged, placing tremendous demands upon schools and other agencies in the urban centers. In several of the large cities of the Nation, the school population of the inner city has become one-half or predominantly Negro. Recognizing with great concern these trends, Fisk University has focused its teacher education program chiefly on the preparation of teachers for schools in the changing urban centers of the nation, particularly for the inner city.

The University has always regarded teacher education as a responsibility of the entire institution, with every department of study contributing to its development and effectiveness. However, the responsibility for the organization and administration of the program is delegated to the Department of Education. The academic structure of Fisk University consists of a liberal arts college and a graduate division, offering instruction on the Master of Arts level in seven departments, including the Department of Education. The Fisk student body is predominantly middle class Negro, with parents of the professional and business groups. The students come chiefly from the urban centers of the nation, extending from Boston in New England to San Francisco and Los Angeles on the Pacific coast. They were prepared for college mainly in the public high schools of the inner city. Due to the prevailing pattern of residential segregation, they live in subdivisions or on the better residential streets within or in close proximity to the ghetto. About one-fourth of the undergraduate student body of 1200 expect to teach. Most of them will assume teaching assignments in the inner city. Many look forward to this with enthusiasm. They know the problems of inner city schools and they have deep feelings about them; their parents are active in community improvement movements and projects; therefore, they want to do something also, to improve education and life in the inner city. This is one of their great hopes as teachers.

The Educational Policy Committee of the Faculty believes that the best basic preparation for excellent teachers is a sound education in the liberal

arts. Thus, as a matter of policy, all prospective teachers are required to pursue the University's common program in general education during the first two years in college. Major study begins in the junior year. Prospective high school teachers major in the subject matter areas in which they expect to teach, while prospective elementary school teachers pursue a major in elementary education.

As a matter of principle, the Department of Education believes that any teacher preparation program should be concerned with the concrete problems and practical situations of the communities and the schools which the prospective teacher expects to serve, and with the cultures of the people who live in the communities. Several of the courses in the general education sequence relate to the problems of American cities and of the minority groups who live in the inner city. This applies specifically to courses in the social sciences. Special courses related to Negro life and culture have been developed over the years and are available as electives.

All of the professional courses in education relate to a common objective - the development of competence to cope with the human and educational problems of the inner city, created by recent changes in the social structure of the urban community. Three key courses are included in the professional sequences required of all prospective teachers;

First, there is a general course in Education listed as American Education: Principles and Practices, in which a significant part is devoted to present day American society and education, emphasizing the social structure of American cities, social changes affecting education, social forces in the community influencing education, and the present crisis in urban education. At this time, much attention is given to the present school crisis in New York City, where many Fisk students expect to return as teachers.

Second, a course called Growing Up in the Inner City, which deals with the impact of the various forces in the inner city upon the growth and development of children from birth through adolescence. Attention is given to such factors as housing, family life, poverty, segregation, discrimination, and others. Resource persons from private and governmental agencies, pressure groups, and various departments of the university are invited to participate in the course as lecturers or consultants, in order to broaden and enrich the experiences of the students enrolled.

Third, the course, Student Teaching provides opportunities for actual teaching, under competent supervision, in the inner city schools of Nashville and occasionally, elsewhere. The elementary student teacher devotes the entire day to this assignment for a period of eight weeks or one-half of a semester. This enables her to gain valuable experiences in every phase of the work of the elementary teacher. The other half of the semester is devoted to classroom studies. The high school student teacher devotes a full morning or a full afternoon to her assignment, which extends throughout the semester.

Two additional courses in Education are available as electives to prospective inner city teachers. One, Education in the South, recognizes the University's traditional obligation to the Region. This course places emphasis upon the social, economic, and political movements, which have influenced educational thought and practice in the South; the rise and decline of bi-racial

education as a legal practice; the struggle for educational equality; and the changing pattern of education in the South today. One-half of the Fisk student body come from Southern cities. This course should prove helpful to those who will remain in the Region as teachers.

The other course, Education of the Negro, provides an analysis of significant research and other publications on the education of the Negro in America from Reconstruction to the present. Emphasis is placed upon those forces in the nation which have determined and conditioned educational opportunities for Negro citizens; and those which have precipitated the present crisis in inner city education throughout the country.

Other professional courses in the undergraduate program, relate to curriculum and teaching, general psychology, educational psychology, and educational tests and measurements. The departmental faculty recognizes several departures in this program from the conventional approach; however, it does not regard the program as unique or spectacular, but one that is sound - one that has a purpose and attempts to fulfill it.

Possibly the most dramatic of the Department's efforts in recent years to meet the challenge of the inner city has been on the graduate level. Recognizing further, the traditional commitment of the University to the Southland, the Department of Education devised three years ago, a graduate program, whereby the institution would strengthen and utilize its total educational resources for the preparation of a select group of experienced elementary teachers for the new kind of social and intellectual leadership needed for the changing public schools of the region. This involved education in human relations, as well as in the technical and substantive aspects of the profession.

In order to guarantee ample support for this venture, assistance was sought from, and granted by the United States Office of Education, under Title (Part C) of the Higher Education Act of 1965. It was understood that if the proposal was approved and the program granted a subsidy, the Department would operate it as a pilot project for one year; and if successful, it would continue, with necessary modifications, as the approved graduate program of the Department for majors in elementary education.

The general purpose of this program was to assist experienced elementary school teachers of promise to understand and interpret the prevailing educational and social problems in the cities of the changing South; and to provide them with the basic preparation necessary to cope with such problems as teachers of children and leaders in the community.

The more specific objectives are as follows:

1. To create among teachers an awareness of the changes and events taking place in the cities of the nation and of the South;

2. To help them identify and interpret developments and problems in public education caused by these changes and events;

3. To help teachers obtain the fundamental knowledge, information, and skills, and other experiences needed to deal effectively with the prevailing problems and the concrete situations:

4. To assist them in developing competence in the selection and planning of learning materials, the direction of the learning process, the translation of progressive educational theories into actual practice; and the utilization of newer educational materials, devices, and procedures to improve the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process.

The courses and other experiences provided to implement these objectives were devoted mainly to the tasks of making education in school relevant to community needs; but at the same time developing among pupils social and intellectual competence at each level of development to make them functional members of society.

Through these two programs, the undergraduate and the graduate - the university hopes to send to the urban centers, teachers who are dedicated; and teachers who are qualified to provide the new kind of social and educational leadership so sorely needed in the inner city schools of the nation. Thus far, American institutions for the education of teachers have unfortunately failed in a large measure to do this.